

## Message Text

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17

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 AID-05 IGA-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01

OES-03 EUR-12 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /072 W

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P 030620Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7396

NASA HEADQUARTERS WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 1164

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSPA, NASA, MA, US

SUBJECT: NASA NEGOTIATIONS

REF: A. TANANARIVE 1124; B. TANANARIVE 1793, 11/19/74.

SUMMARY: GENERAL ANDRIAMAHAZO ESSENTIALLY WASHED HIS HANDS OF NASA IN DISCUSSION WITH DEFENSE ATTACHE JULY 2. ANDRIA-MAHAZO SAID HIS JOB WAS NOW PURELY MILITARY, NOT POLITICAL, AND SAID HE COULD NOT OFFER ASSISTANCE. EMBASSY'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEALING WITH PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA'S DEMAND FOR BACKRENT ARE SET OUT BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. DEFENSE ATTACHE CALLED UPON GENERAL ANDRIAMAHAZO JULY 2 AS FORESEEN REFTEL A. DEFENSE ATTACHE (DATT) DISCUSSED OTHER SUBJECTS AND THEN TURNED TO NASA INFORMING GENERAL OF PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA'S RENEWAL OF HIS BACKRENT DEMANDS. GENERAL ANDRIAMAHAZO SAID HIS NEW POSITION WAS MILITARY, NOT POLITICAL, AND DID NOT INCLUDE RESPONSIBILITY FOR NASA. GENERAL SAID NASA MISSED ITS CHANCE WITH HIM LATE LAST YEAR WHEN HE WAS STILL MINISTER FOR TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT AND HE WAS READY TO SIGN AGREEMENT. (SEE COMMENTS REFTEL B). GENERAL THEN CHANGED SUBJECT. WHEN DATT RETURNED TO SUBJECT OF NASA, GENERAL PUT HIS FINGERS IN HIS EARS. DATT PERSISTED, HOWEVER, AND GENERAL, IN RESPONSE TO FURTHER QUESTIONS, SAID IT WOULD  
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PROBABLY BE BETTER TO RESPOND TO RATSIRAKA THROUGH FOREIGN

OFFICE. WHEN DATT ASKED GENERAL IF HE THOUGHT RATSIRAKA WOULD REALLY CLOSE STATION, GENERAL REPLIED, "HE IS CAPABLE OF IT." ANDRIAMAHAZO THEN CHANGED SUBJECT AGAIN SAYING HE COULD OFFER NO FURTHER ASSISTANCE.

2. EMBASSY BELIEVES INTERIM NOTE TO FOREIGN OFFICE REQUESTING DEFERRAL OF DETAILED RESPONSE TO RATSIRAKA'S DEMANDS AND TO MOFA NOTE OF MARCH 26 UNTIL AFTER ASTP AND AFTER NASA CONSULTATIONS WITH ACTING STADIR IN WASHINGTON SCHEDULED FOR LATE JULY MIGHT SERVE TO GET AROUND RATSIRAKA'S JULY 15 DEADLINE. EMBASSY WOULD FORWARD COPY OF NOTE TO PRESIDENTIAL OFFICES WITH COVERING LETTER DETAILING EMBASSY AND NASA STATION'S PLANS TO INVITE PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA, OTHER GOMR OFFICIALS, SOVIET AMBASSADOR, AND PRESS TO STATION DURING ASTP MISSION. IMPLICATION WOULD BE CLEAR THAT RATSIRAKA COULD EXPECT UNFAVORABLY PUBLICITY IF HE ACTS TO INTERFERE WITH STATION OPERATION SHORTLY BEFORE OR DURING ASTP. RISK WITH THIS APPROACH IS THAT IT MAY RAISE UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS WHICH COULD CAUSE HIM TO BLOW UP WHEN WE LATER TELL HIM AGAIN THAT WE CANNOT PAY BACKRENT OR HIGHER RENTAL. IN ADDITION, HE MAY SIMPLY INSIST ON DEADLINE.

3. OTHER APPROACH IS TO SEND MORE COMPLETE NOTE TO FOREIGN OFFICE ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

A. FIRST PART OF NOTE WOULD ALSO SEEK DEFERRAL OF NEGOTIATIONS DUE TO ASTP AS IN PRECEDING PARAGRAPH;

B. RESTATE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF STATION TO MADAGASCAR;

C. RESTATE PAST U.S. AID AND REFER TO POSSIBILITIES FOR FUTURE;

D. REJECT DEMAND FOR BACKRENT (AGAIN A RESTATEMENT OF U.S. POSITION);

E. RESTATE U.S. OFFER OF \$100,000 PER YEAR DATING FROM 1973;

F. INDICATE THAT ALTERNATIVES TO STATION MADAGASCAR ARE AVAILABLE BUT U.S. PREFERENCE IS TO REMAIN.  
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THIS ALTERNATIVE MAY CARRY HIGHER SHORT-RANGE RISK IN TERMS OF RATSIRAKA ACTION BEFORE JULY 15 DEADLINE, BUT IN LONG RUN IS MORE STRAIGHTFORWARD, AND LESS LIKELY TO LEAVE US OPEN TO CHARGES OF MISLEADING HIM. EMBASSY PREFERS THIS APPROACH.

4. EITHER ALTERNATIVE ABOVE COULD BE REPLACED OR SUPPLEMENTED BY LETTER FROM NASA ADMINISTRATOR TO PRESIDENT RATSIRAKA SAYING

ABOUT THE SAME THING. LETTER COULD BE DELIVERED PERSONALLY BY CHARGE AND COULD SERVE TO GIVE NASA QUICK READING AS TO WHERE IT STANDS - IF APPOINTMENT GRANTED AND RESPONSE GIVEN.

5. EMBASSY BELIEVES IT IS NOT REPEAT NOT ADVISABLE TO IGNORE RATSIRAKA'S JULY 15 DEADLINE. SOME SORT OF RESPONSE IS NECESSARY. RESPONDING IN LAST MINUTE HAS ADVANTAGE OF GIVEING RATSIRAKA MINIMUM TIME TO REACT BUT CUTTING STATION COMMUNICATIONS IS EASY IN ANY CASE AS HAS BEEN DEMONSTRATED, AND DISADVANTAGE, OF COURSE, IS THAT NASA WILL HAVE LESS TIME TO REACT.

6. IF IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO NASA, CHARGE WOULD BE GLAD TO DISCUSS SITUATION WITH NASA HEADQUARTERS ON NASA STATION SCAMA LINE FROM STATION. SENSITIVE AREAS COULD PROBABLY BE HANDLED BY REFERRING TO LINES IN CABLES OR CIRCUMLOCUTIONS. ELFERS

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## Message Attributes

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**Draft Date:** 03 JUL 1975  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** ElyME  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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